

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 HA-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
DODE-00 FAA-00 DOTE-00 CAB-05 SSO-00 INRE-00 IO-14
/053 W

-----106745 161337Z /44

O 161245Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1540

AMEMBASSY COTONOU IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS LIBREVILLE 2253

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OCLR, GB, DM

SUBJECT: CHARTER AIRLINE TO EVACUATE BENINESE REFUGEES

REF: STATE 206641, COTONOU 1164

1. SITUATION HERE AS OF 1200Z TODAY IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. LIBREVILLE IS SHUT TIGHTER THAN DRUM. MOST OFFICIALS
HAVE LEFT FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT OYEM.

B. AIR GABON IS AWARE OF TRANS INTERNATIONAL'S INTENTION FLY
IN DC-10 BEGINNING AUG 17, AND APPARENTLY HAS SAME FLIGHT
SCHEDULE AS REFTTEL.

C. TRANS INTERNATIONAL HAS SENT REP HERE FROM PARIS, LOUISETTE
GUIONNET.

D. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER TIA'S MESSAGE EVER REACHED GOG CIVIL
AIR AUTHORITIES. LIBREVILLE CONTROL TOWER PERSONNEL AS OF
THIS MORNING, HOWEVER, HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE THAT ANY FLIGHT
CLEARANCES HAVE BEEN GRANTED, NOR DOES AIRPORT COMMANDER.

E. AIR GABON REP BELIEVES CLEARANCE NOT SPECIFICALLY NECESSARY
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SINCE TIA IS CHARTERED BY AIR GABON. THEY HAVE NOT, APPARENTLY,
BEEN IN TOUCH WITH CIVIL AVIATION. WE HAVE URGED THEM DO SO
IMMEDIATELY. MEANWHILE GUIONNET IS SENDING A TELEX TO PARILLA
DIRECT TELLING HIM CLEARANCE GRANTED ON STRENGTH OF AIR GABON'S
ASSURANCE THERE WILL BE NO PROBLEM. SHE IS, HOWEVER, AWARE THAT
CIVIL AVIATION CLEARANCE NOT YET GRANTED AND PRESUMABLY IS
WORKING AT IT.

F. GOG MOFA IS AWARE OF TIA FLIGHTS BUT SO FAR AS WE CAN TELL,
HAS NOT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH CIVIL AVIATION EITHER.

2. SUGGEST YOU INFORM PARILLA IMMEDIATELY. WE WILL CONTINUE
EFFORT TO SECURE CLEARANCE FOR HIM BUT IN LIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES,
CANNOT GUARANTEE IT. AIR GABON MAY VERY WELL TURN OUT TO BE
CORRECT THAT THERE WILL BE NO PROBLEM, INASMUCH AS GOG HAS
ASKED FOR CHARTERS FOR PURPOSE SPECIFIED, BUT FACT REMAINS THAT
AS OF NOW, THERE IS NO SPECIFIC CLEARANCE. WE THINK THAT
EVEN IF WE CANNOT GET SPECIFIC CLEARANCE BY TOMORROW, THERE
WILL PROBABLY NOT BE PROBLEM WE CANNOT SORT OUT,IF NECESSARY,
BUT FINAL DECISION MUST BE TIA'S. IF DECISION IS TO GO,IT
WOULD BE HELPFUL IF WE KNEW IT.

3. WE KNOW OF NO SECURITY PROBLEMS ON ANY CHARTERS USED THUS FAR.
SEVERAL IBERIAN AIRWAYS FLIGHTS HAVE HAD NO REPORTED PROBLEMS.
EARLIER CHARTERS BY UTA, SABENA AND AIR AFRIQUE, SO FAR AS WE
AWARE, HAVE NOT HAD PROBLEMS EITHER. TIENKEN

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